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stored in the safe. We have recently given it to the Albany Institute of History and Art in anticipation of the celebration of the 250th Anniversary of our founding (1763). We know precious little about the coin but have seen a great deal of speculation on its use and noticed that the last one to be sold at auction was in Jan. 2012 for \$115,000 -- a pretty penny!

We have seen discussion of the coin sometimes describing it as a "communion token," a common practice in the Scots-Presbyterian tradition, but we feel confident that this coin is not for that purpose. Although communion tokens were used in the early history of our Albany church, there is also this reference, quoted from even earlier records of the church as follows: "It was resolved that one thousand coppers be stamped *church penny*, and placed in the hands of the treasurer, for the purpose of exchanging with the congregation at the rate of twelve for one shilling, in order to add respect to the weekly collections." (J. McClusky Blayney, *History of the First Presbyterian Church of Albany, NY.; Lists of its Officers, and a Complete Catalogue of its Members From its Organization*, Albany: Jenkins and Johnston, 1877). You mention this in one of your comments on the coin but from a source that is apparently quoting the Blayney source.

We are assuming that members of the congregation bought these pennies to put in the collection plate weekly, and that the purpose was to get money from congregants up-front whether or not they came to church and put them in the plate, and to recycle and resell the coins that were returned and put in the collection plate.

I have several questions about the coin:

1. Is the above assumption correct?
2. Are there other examples of church coins minted for a similar purpose either in the US or England/Scotland or anywhere?
3. Can you lead us to a full and definitive discussion of the Albany Church Penny?

An early attendee of our church was Alexander Hamilton, and it was our pastor, Eliphalet Nott, who delivered the funeral oration after his duel with Aaron Burr, who also attended the church, as did John Jay. That speech, many feel, was a deciding factor in the outlawing of dueling in the US. At the time of the issuing of this coin (1790) Alexander Hamilton was deeply involved, as you know, in getting the US Mint going. We feel that the value of this coin is in its continuing historical connection; it shows the wear of time, as it should.

Thanks for your attention. Help!!! if you can and are so inclined.

Best regards,

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